

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-4766

### 1. Name

Historic 504 – 520 South Durham Street  
and / common

### 2. Location

street & number 504 – 520 South Durham Street  
city, town Baltimore  
state & zip code Maryland 21231 county

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

### 4. Owner of Property

name  
street & number telephone  
city, town state & zip code

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber  
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio  
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title  
date federal state county local  
depository for survey records  
city, town state & zip code

## 7. Description

**Condition**

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

**Check One**

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

**Check One**

☒ original site  
☐ moved:  
date of move: \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This group of nine two-bay-wide, two-and-a-half story brick houses with gable roofs and dormer windows are typical of the small groups of two-and-a-half story, Federal-style houses built in Baltimore in the 1820s. This particular row is also quite typical of the ways in which the older rowhouses in Baltimore have been "improved" over the years, with either formstone or a sensitive restoration, reflecting the different tastes of different owners.

The houses are two-and-a-half stories in height, but range in width and lot sizes. 504-508 are very narrow—at just 9'10" – 10'6" in width—and occupy lots 48' deep. The pairs at 510-512 and 514-516 are 15' and 16' wide, respectively, on lots 46' and 56'10" in depth. 518-522 are narrow again, ranging between 9'9" – 10'10" wide on lots 54'10" deep. Each house is two rooms deep with a one-story brick rear kitchen addition somewhat narrower than the house. Because early house lots in Baltimore were laid out back to back, without rear service alleys, the only entrance to the backyard is through the sallyport located in the center of pairs.

The houses are constructed in running bond and were originally painted. Many have been covered with formstone and 514 has had its roof raised to a full three stories, with a shed roof. The pitched gable roofs are covered with modern asphalt shingles overtop the original cedar shakes. A simple corbelled brick cornice runs across the façade. There is a common chimney stack located along the partition wall at both the front and rear of the houses. Each house also has a chimney at the rear of the kitchen addition.

The door and window openings have flat wood lintels and sills. The window openings are filled with replacement 1/1 sash, or in the case of the renovated house, replacement 6/6 sash. A variety of replacement door types have been used and no original doors remain. The houses sit on low basements, the entrances being reached by two concrete, brick, or marble steps. An arched alleyway runs between each pair of houses.

The houses are two rooms deep, with the front room being entered directly from the front door. The front and back rooms of the first floor are separated by a wide opening, with the tightly winding, narrow stairs set in the rear room, in the space between the partition wall and the fireplace. The one-story rear addition served as the kitchen, with its own cooking fireplace. There are two bedrooms on the second floor of the main part of the house, each with a fireplace, and a third room in the dormer story.

## 8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other: specify	

**Specific dates** c. 1820

**Builder/Architect**

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This group of houses is significant as being representative of the common form of two-and-a-half story houses built in the oldest sections of Baltimore in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. By the later 1820s and the 1830s, builders more often constructed longer rows of houses as speculative ventures, but at the beginning of the century pairs, involving less risk and less initial capital, were the rule. The houses do not differ markedly from the two-and-a-half story houses built on nearby main streets—they are simply somewhat narrower and smaller versions priced to serve less affluent residents of the old walking city.

These particular houses were built at a time when Fells Point was already an important ship building center for the growing town of Baltimore. Early occupants included people involved in the maritime trades, small-scale craftsmen, and laborers who made their homes in the smaller scale and more affordable housing located on the small "alley" streets of Fells Point. Until about 1850 Durham Street was known as Happy Alley and its occupants were racially mixed.

The houses are especially significant as being located in the oldest part of Fells Point, only a few blocks from the water, and represent an integral part of the history of this National Register district. Slated for demolition in the 1960s as part of the planned East-West highway connection existing segments of I-95 to the north and south of the city, these houses were saved by local preservation activists who created the Fells Point National Register District in 1969.

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*  
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

## 10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

## 11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

date

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

telephone

city, town Baltimore

state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of property rights.

Return to:

DHCP/DHCD

Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place

Crownsville MD 21032-2023



БАСО. НД

50

ST.

60

N  
↑

ST.

AVE.

## WORKS

LA. Sheppard & Co  
EXCELSIOR STOVE

+AVE

## FOUNTAIN

ED41 YARD

-ST

51.

1555

91

!

1

71

11



WAFLE HOUSE  
2/10/

44



100

**PACHING**



FILE

100

SYSTEM & FRUIT
SYSTEMS

**T-PACK**

9N12

1000

PLANCIA B.

11

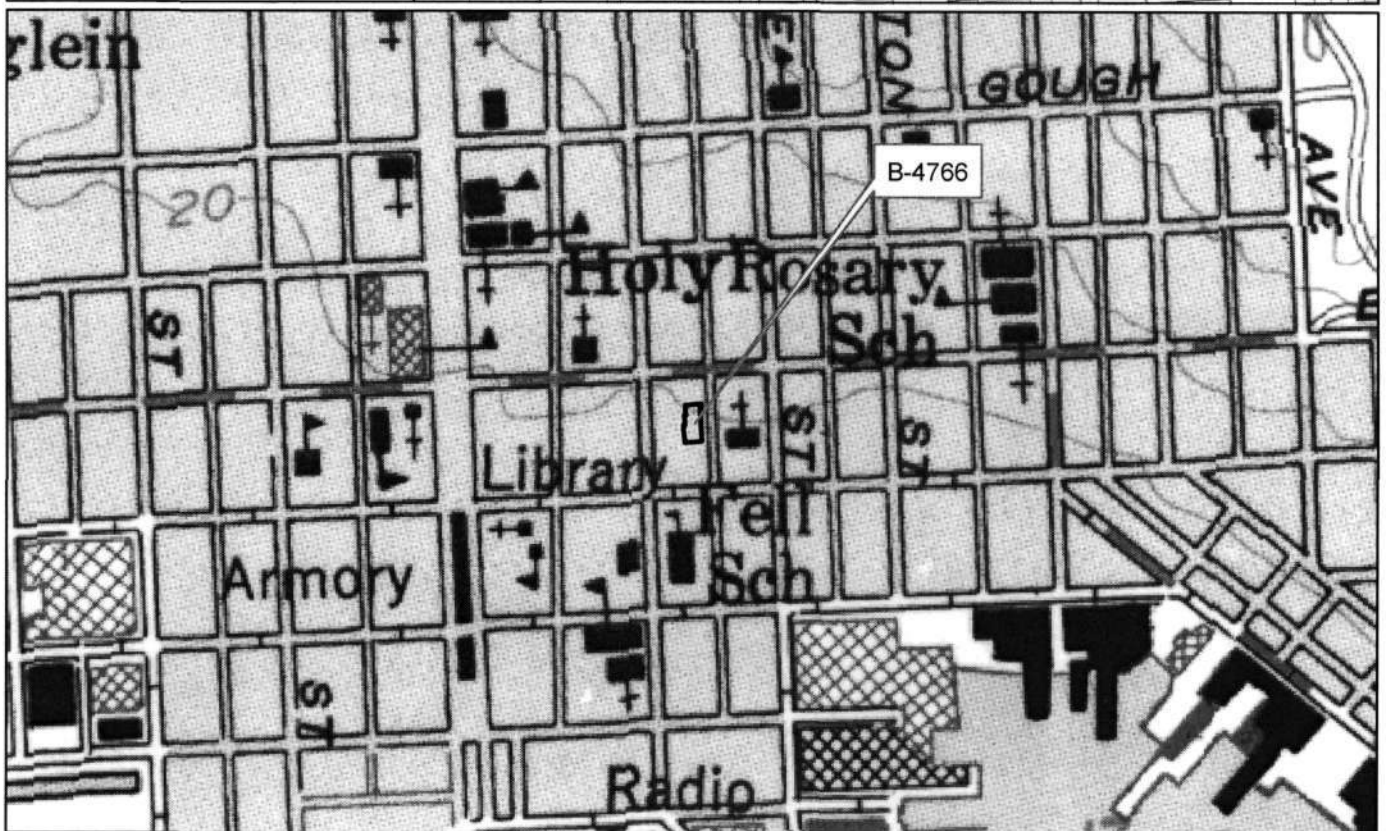
10

1111

3

GERMAN AMERICAN  
CHEMICAL PAINT & VARNISH

B-4766  
504-520 S. Durham Street  
Block 1781 Lots 032A-066  
Baltimore City  
Baltimore East Quad.





504-522 S Durham

F76

B-4766

504-520 S. Durham St.

BACTO. MD

C. Belpare

12/47

MD SHPO

1/2

100

[21]384 021





520 S Durham  
FD6

B-4766  
520 S. Durham St.  
Bacto. MD 100  
C. Belfiore  
12/97  
2/2

1200384 0211 42145